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and Tindal and decide whether Professor Gardiner is warranted in his sweeping assertion that Wyclif's version, "it is almost certain, contributed nothing to our present English Bible." That Tindal translated from the original, not only in his New Testament but in his Pentateuch, is now well established; but the phrases of Wyclif stuck in his memory, and he could no more avoid echoing them than the revisers could help using his own and Coverdale's rhythms, whether they would or not.

As for the psychological reasons for the mysterious sensuous charm of the biblical rhythms and vocalic harmonies, to which all the greatest English prose writers owe much of their inspiration, Professor Gardiner has many suggestive comments. In some examples he traces out the prose meters and the succession of open vowels and liquid consonants, which the English Bible possesses in larger measure than any other translation except perhaps the Vulgate. More of this analysis would be decidedly worth while. If this essay leads a larger number of students both of literature and of theology to study that grand style of Tindal and his followers instead of trying to patronize it, the effect will be salutary both upon their appreciation of literature and upon their own work in prose composition.

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The Fourth Gospel: Its Purpose and Theology. By ERNEST F. SCOTT. ("The Literature of the New Testament.") Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906; New York: imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. Pp. x+379. \$2 net.

Mr. Scott has written a book which no student of the New Testament can afford to neglect. One may not accept its theory of the Fourth Gospel, but he cannot fail to be touched by the remarkable freshness and suggestiveness of the discussion, the sympathetic Christian spirit everywhere manifest, and the winning simplicity of the presentation.

The author assumes "the results of the critical investigation" which usually precedes a treatise on biblical theology. These results, for his book, are "that which is now generally accepted by continental scholars" (p. v). Incidental statements introduced into the book, without which the reader would hardly understand the author's point of view, indicate something of the details of these results: "The gospel is a unity from first to last" (p. 85); that the author was by birth a Jew "is an almost certain inference" (p. 75); yet the gospel is the message of an "unknown disciple" (p. 376), and we face "our ignorance of the authorship of the work and of

the immediate occasion which called it forth" (p. 353), except that it was "in all probability" written at Ephesus (p. 79), and may be assigned "with a fair degree of certainty" to the first or second decade of the second century (p. 4). Accordingly, the "eyewitness" authorship, "in its literal sense," cannot be substantiated. At the same time, the gospel is the result of a "deliberate artistic purpose" (p. 18); even "the picturesque detail in John's narrative can be set down, not to the accurate memory of the eyewitness, but to the fine instinct of the literary artist" (p. 19); so that the entire production is "no simple, spontaneous utterance . . . but a work of elaborate art" (pp. 26, 27). And this position concerning the authorship is safe because "it may be taken for granted that the external evidence is not sufficient to warrant a decisive verdict on either side; and any further discussion even of the critical problem must concern itself mainly with the gospel itself" (p. vi).

It will be seen, therefore, that Mr. Scott has not given us the teaching of Jesus; he has offered an interpretation of "the elaborate theological gospel" (p. 371), which is "a work of transition, in which primitive Christianity is carried over into a different world of thought" (p. 4). For the author of the gospel, naturally, then, "the import of the fact is always more valuable than the fact itself" (p. 3). He gave us a definite statement of his purpose in writing the gospel (20:31); this "does not, however, cover the whole purpose of the gospel. It arose . . . out of the immediate life and needs of the early church; and . . . the religious aim is combined with a more practical one" (p. 23). This practical aim was apologetic—on the one hand, a covert polemic against Judaism, against the followers of John the Baptist, and against "incipient Gnosticism" (pp. 65-103); on the other, an ecclesiastical propaganda, so that "a whole region of John's thinking becomes intelligible only when we take account of this ecclesiastical interest which underlies his gospel" (p. 25). For the accomplishment of such a purpose the materials were directly at hand: "Three main influences are everywhere traceable in the gospel—the synoptic tradition, the writings of Paul, the Alexandrian philosophy." These the author borrowed "for the most part [as] rude material;" out of them he made a gift of "spirit and life" (p. 30).

In the more strictly theological portions of the book the treatment is hardly less interesting and suggestive. The Logos; "the Christ, the Son of God;" the work of Christ; life, and its communication; the return of Christ; and the Holy Spirit, are the topics that receive attention. Only a reading of the work itself can give any adequate idea of the interpretation of the gospel which is here offered.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Mr. Scott's treatment is his recurrent insistence on the contrasts which he finds in the gospel. "Nearly every sentence in the gospel might be paralleled with another which appears to indicate a view of different tenor" (p. 12); the gospel is "a book of contrasts, of seeming contradictions" (p. 27). In each topic touched by the author of the gospel Mr. Scott finds this contrast. There is "the double relation" (p. 101), "the dual character of John's thinking" (p. 138), the "two parallel interpretations" (p. 174), the "two aspects, which are radically distinct" (p. 205), the "attempt to reconcile two ideas which are in their very nature disparate" (p. 264), "a metaphysic which in itself is alien to the Christian teaching" (p. 319); "in every part of the gospel we can discover two lines of thinking, apparently brought together, but in reality parallel and distinct" (p. 367).

Attractive as the presentation is, it suggests criticism. Details must be passed by, however, for there is space only to touch the main thesis. As to this, one feels that *altogether too much* has been found in the gospel. An author who could produce such a work as Mr. Scott finds in the Fourth Gospel must have been at once the incarnation of ingenuousness and of literary and theological genius. The assumption seems too great; the bridge to the "unknown" appears to be likely to break from its own weight. Merely to preserve such "contrasts," whether consciously or unconsciously, in a unique whole, would have been a herculean task. And the strangest thing about the situation would be that the gospel is the only trace of himself which such an author has left to the world. He was able to produce a unique theological work, to combine apparent simplicity with transcendent theological insight and shrewdness; but he was able to do this only once, or to do it, and then, as the supreme mark of his genius, to hide himself forever.

The possibility is fascinating, but is it more than a possibility? One still wonders whether the last word has been said about the external evidence; whether the finding of such a transcendent "unknown" for the author of the Fourth Gospel may not contribute indirectly toward identifying him once more with the son of Zebedee, if not for the gospel as it stands, at least for its substance.

Perhaps it is best to take Mr. Scott as he has taken John (whether rightly remains to be seen)—a combination of streams of thought which can hardly be harmonized, and which leads to inconsistencies of thinking and direct contradictions of expression, as, e. g., in his treatment of "Life" on pages 258 and 294.

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